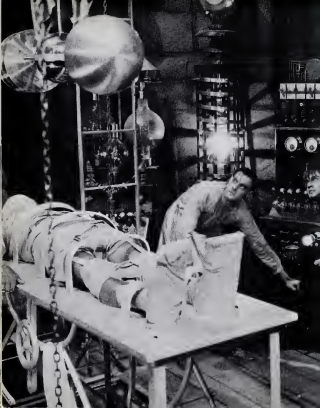




MAD SCIENTISTS







MAD SCIENTISTS

by Ian Thorne



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MAD SCIENTISTS



FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

The horror-movie scene is one we all know.

It is a laboratory. Tables are covered with strange glassware. Liquids bubble and steam. Odd electrical machines stand about. They may have blinking lights. Or if the movie is an old one, sparks may snap from them. There may be cages of animals. Or perhaps an operating table with — gasp! — a human subject strapped to it.

Then the man of science enters. He is ready for action. A strange gleam is in his eye.

Someone rushes in to plead with him. It may be a friend. It may be a wife or daughter. Or even a fellow scientist with more sense.

"Don't do it, Doctor! Don't perform the experiment! There are some things man was not meant to know!"

But the scientist only smiles. Fools may try to stop him, but he is not afraid! He will perform the experiment. He must know if his idea is correct!

The person who tried to stop the scientist turns away sadly. "No good will come of this, Doctor. You're mad! Mad, I tell you!"

Of course the scientist is mad. And of course his experiment will have a horrible ending. The search for "forbidden" knowledge will bring tragedy to others. It will bring doom to the scientist himself, too.

That is always the plot of "mad scientist" movies.

Fu Manchu and his lovely but evil daughter take good care of their death-ray machine. Boris Karloff and Hyma Lay starred in The Mask of Fu Manchu (1932).



Mr. Hyde.

The oldest of the movie mad scientists is Dr. Henry Jekyll. The poet Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 1886. Just one year later, it became a successful stage play. The first silent movie version came out in 1908. That was two years before Thomas Edison's movie, *Frankenstein*. (Another mad scientist story!)



Fredric March played both the good Dr. Jekyll (above) and the evil Mr. Hyde.

The best movie version of Jekyll and Hyde was made in 1931. It starred Fredric March, who won an Academy Award for it.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is the story of the two natures of the human soul. The good and the evil. Good Dr. Jekyll set free the evil person within himself. He was changed into a monster called Mr. Hyde.



It happened in London in the late 1800's. A brilliant young doctor, Henry Jekyll gave a speech. Hundreds of fellow scientists and students listened.

Jekyll said: "London is full of fog. It has cut through our brains and limited our sight. We are men of science. We should be curious and bold. We should look into the wonders of the human brain. We should look into the very soul of man!"

The audience murmured.

"I believe man has two selves. One is good. The other is evil. If we could separate the two, the good might become better. Then the so-called evil would fulfill itself and trouble us no more.

"In my experiments, I find that certain chemicals have the power . . ."

The speech ended. Dr. Jekyll bowed to applause. Next he hurried to his hospital to take care of a poor old woman. The trip made him late for a party that evening.

His loved one, Muriel Carew, was at the party with her father. Henry and Muriel hoped they would be able to marry soon. However, old General Carew wanted them to wait. He insisted on it.

Henry had to agree. Even so he was in a fury. After the party, he walked home with his friend, Lanyon. As they passed through a shabby street they heard screams



Henry Jekyll speaks to his fiancée, Muriel Carew (Rose Hobart). Her father, General Carew (Halliwell Hobbes) and Jekyll's friend, Dr. Lanyon (Holmes Herbert) listen.

Jekyll and Lanyon hurried toward the noise. They found a pretty blonde woman struggling with a rough looking man. Jekyll moved in and hauled the man away.

The woman yelled "Hit me, will he? Blast his dirty mug! He's killed me! Broken me jaw!"

She was Ivy Pierson, a woman of the streets. She was also young and beautiful. Dr. Jekyll helped her up the stairs to her room.

Ivy said: "It's awful kind of you to look after me. Anyone can see that you're a real gent."

The doctor examined Ivy's injuries. They were not serious. "You'll be quite well in a few days."

Ivy looked at the doctor with grateful eyes . . . How different she was from cool Muriel! Different, but appealing, in spite of her rough manners.

Ivy reached out her arms. Dr. Jekyll could not help responding. They kissed.

At that moment, Lanyon came into the room!

Jekyll tried to make a joke of it. "I'll call that kiss my fee!" he said, then he and Lanyon left.

Jekyll's friend was icy. "I thought your behavior was shocking. Have you forgotten Muriel?"

"Of course not. It was simply an instinct —"



"You ought to control those instincts," said Lanyon.

"It can't be done. Unless . . . we separate the two natures within us. If my theory is correct, it can be done."

Lanyon only laughed. "You're mad," he said.

Henry Jekyll went on with his experiments. He searched for the chemical that would let him separate the good and the evil in human nature. He worked without sleep, without food.

His servant brought him a note. It was from Muriel. She scolded him for not coming to a dinner party he had promised to attend. How foolish!

He felt he was near success in his experiment. The chemical would surely work! He would try it on himself. Tonight. He wrote a note to Muriel. It said:

"If I die, it is in the cause of science. I shall love you always, through eternity."

Then he drank the chemical.

Henry Jekyll stood before a mirror. He saw himself begin to change . . .

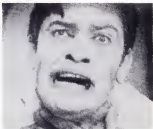
Pain wracked his body. His face twisted. His mild, kindly expression vanished. His nose became ape-like. His teeth jutted, like those of an ape. His forehead became low. His eyes were deep sunk. They were shining with wickedness.

"Free!" he cried. "And they called me mad! Ah! If they could see me now!"

The evil side of Henry Jekyll had taken over his body. All of the evil in his human nature was now free.



Henry Jekyll drinks the chemical then watches his appearance and mood change from good to evil.



He put on his cloak and hat. He bounded outside into the rain. Free! Free to do all the evil he wished to do! No one could stop him!

He went looking for Ivy Pierson. She was at work — singing in a music hall. He went to that place and took a table. Ivy was singing:

"Champagne Ivy is me name. Good for any game at night, me boys."

She was invited to sit at the table with the man in the cloak. "My name is Hyde," he said. "I have admired you."



At first, Ivy (Miriam Hopkins) is fascinated by Mr. Hyde.

Ivy was cool with Mr. Hyde. She drank champagne with him. She noticed his expensive clothes. He was ugly but he had money. And Ivy was poor.

"I want you," Mr. Hyde told Ivy. "And what I want, I get."

Ivy could not resist Mr. Hyde. He promised her nice clothes and jewels. He told her he loved her. He said he would give her a nice place to stay. She would live like a real lady.

Ivy believed him. When she found out the evil truth about Mr. Hyde, it was too late.

He was a human monster. He beat her. He was evil to her in a thousand ways — as a cat tortures a mouse that it plans to kill.

Ivy wanted to escape from Mr. Hyde, but she was too frightened. For a whole month, he kept her in his power.

And then he went away!

Mild Dr. Henry Jekyll appeared once more. The chemical had changed him back into his normal self. Back in his lab, he wrote a note to Ivy. He enclosed a large sum of money and had his servant deliver the note to her.

Henry visited Muriel. "I have been ill," he told her. "It was a sickness of the soul. I've played with dangerous knowledge. I've walked a strange and terrible road. Help me find my way back!"



Ivy begs Dr. Jekyll to save her from the evil Hyde.

Muriel promised she would help him. They would be married at once. Her love would heal him.

That evening, Henry Jekyll was full of joy. But then he had a visitor. It was Ivy Pierson.

"I've come to thank you for the money," she said. "But I can't keep it. Hyde wouldn't allow it. He's a beast! Oh, help me, sir. You're good and kind. Help me get away from him."

Jekyll realized at last what he had done. As "Mr. Hyde," he had done dreadful things to this poor woman. He decided to give up his experiments forever.

"You will never see Hyde again," he promised.

Ivy left, reassured. Jekyll went ahead with the plans for his marriage. He drank no more of the chemical. All that was behind him.

But was it? His evil self had been freed. Would it stay chained, deep within his soul? One evening, Jekyll sat on a park bench. He saw a cat creep up on a bird and kill it. It awakened a memory within him . . .

To his horror, Jekyll felt himself begin to change! Mr. Hyde had refused to die. He was returning. He was taking over Henry Jekyll's body.

"It is death! Death!" cried Mr. Hyde.

He went to look for Ivy.



Mr. Hyde.



She was alone in her room celebrating. She had believed Dr. Jekyll when he said that Hyde would trouble her no more.

But suddenly, he was there!

"You thought I wouldn't come back!" he snarled. "You believed that hypocrite, Jekyll. You went down on your knees to him, the man I hate! You wanted him to love you!"

"No, no, it ain't so!" screamed Ivy.

"I'll give you a lover now," said Hyde. "His name is Death!"

Ivy tried to run away. But Hyde was after her with superhuman speed. He seized her. His hairy hands closed about her throat.

There came a pounding at the door. Ivy's screams had brought other people to see what was wrong. Hyde crashed through them and ran off into the fog.

A policeman came and looked at poor Ivy's body. "A monster did this," he said.

"I know him!" said the landlady. "His name is Hyde!"

Hyde knew he was in great danger. He had to change back into Dr. Jekyll. He sent a note to his friend Lanyon. It asked Lanyon to get the chemicals from Jekyll's lab.

Lanyon did so. Then Hyde came to his house and asked for the chemical. Lanyon would not give it to him. He thought Hyde had kidnapped Jekyll.

"I will show you," Hyde said. He drank the chemicals before Lanyon could stop him.

"You sneered at the wonders of science," said Mr. Hyde. "Now look! Look!"

Lanyon saw the monstrous Hyde change into Dr. Jekyll. "I am a murderer," the doctor confessed. "Help me, Lanyon. Help me!"

But his friend said: "There is no help for you."

Jekyll returned to his home. He prayed. "Oh, God, forgive me. I've done something no man should do."

He went to Muriel Carew. He told her he could not marry her. Then he left. As he went, he began to change and became Mr. Hyde!



Jekyll tells Muriel that he cannot marry her.

Hyde came into the music room where Muriel sat weeping. He crept up on her.

Muriel looked up and screamed in horror. Her father, General Carew, heard her. He rushed into the room. He and Hyde began to fight. They went crashing through the French doors and onto the patio.

Hyde raised his cane. It had a heavy metal knob. He struck General Carew again and again. Then he ran away, just as the police came up.

Later, Lanyon looked sadly at General Carew's body. "I know whose cane that is," he told the police. "I can take you to the man."

They set off for Jekyll's laboratory.



Hyde attacks General Carew.



Lanyon and the police confronted Dr. Jekyll.

"Hyde is not here," the doctor said. "He went out the back way."

Lanyon said: "He has not gone away. There is your man!" And he pointed at Dr. Jekyll.

At that moment, Jekyll began to change. He became Hyde right before their eyes. He grabbed a knife.

A police inspector drew his gun and fired.

Mr. Hyde fell dying. As his life slipped away, he began to change once more. The good and the evil of Henry Jekyll merged into a single man. And then he died.





THE INVISIBLE MAN

Another of the greatest mad scientist movies was *The Invisible Man*. It was made in 1933, based on novel written by H. G. Wells in 1897.

The story began on a snowy day in England . . .

A man came to the village Inn at Iping. His face was heavily bandaged. Dark goggles covered his eyes.

"I want a room and a fire," he told the innkeeper. Then, as the inn's customers stared, he went upstairs and made himself at home.

During the next few days, boxes arrived for the stranger. He kept to himself. He worked alone in his room, which he turned into a chemical laboratory.

Meanwhile, the innkeeper and the villagers began to worry. Who was this man? What was he up to?

"I think he must be a criminal!" one man said.

"Call in the constable!" said a woman.

The village policeman was called. He and a small group of villagers went to the stranger's room. They forced their way in.

The bandaged man was angry. "So you want to know who I am! I'll show you!"

He took off the dark goggles. There's a little souvenir for you." Then removed a false nose. "And another for you!"



'He's all eaten away!' exclaimed the horrified policeman.

The stranger ripped off false hair. Next he began to unwind the bandages that covered his head.



Suspicious villagers confront the mysterious stranger.

But there was no head.

"It's easy, if you're clever!" said the stranger. The villagers stared as if turned to stone. The headless man took off coat, shirt, tie, pants, and underwear. There was no body underneath!

"Just a few chemicals, mixed together," said the voice of the stranger. "That's all it takes."

"Blimey — he's invisible!" cried a villager.

"Just a few chemicals," laughed the stranger. "A little of this and that. Injected under the skin. Flesh and bone just fade away! An invisible man can rule the world. Nobody

will see him come. Nobody will see him go. He can hear every secret. He can rob the rich . . . and kill."

And a terrible laugh rang out in the room. The invisible Man was free and he was mad.



The Invisible Man ignores the pleadings of Gloria Stuart, who plays Flora Cranley.



Housekeeper Una O'Connor knows there's something fishy about this fellow.

That same evening, the Invisible Man went to the home of his friend, Dr. Kemp.

"It is I, Jack Griffin!" said the voice of the unseen one. "For five years I worked on my discovery. Monocaine! It has made me invisible. And it has lit up my brain!"

Griffin told his friend he planned to rule the world. "We'll begin with a reign of terror. A few murders —"

Kemp was frightened. The monocaine had not only made Griffin invisible, it had driven him completely insane.



The police inspector feels an invisible body!



Griffin killed a policeman. His fiancée, Flora Granley, tried to reason with him. He brushed her aside. "I shall offer my secret to the world. I will sell it for millions! The winning country can sweep the earth with invisible armies!"

Griffin began his reign of terror. He killed and robbed. The police tried without luck to capture him.

Then one night, the Invisible Man was cornered in a barn. People set fire to it. When Griffin ran out, his footprints were seen in the snow.

A policeman fired his pistol. There in the snow was the outline of an invisible body . . .

The Invisible Man was taken to a hospital. Crying, Flora leaned over the bed where he lay. A doctor told her it was impossible to treat invisible wounds. Griffin was dying.

"I wanted to do something great," Griffin whispered. "I was so poor. I had nothing to offer you, Flora."

His voice grew weaker and weaker. "My darling, I have failed. I got involved in things that man must leave alone."

With that, the Invisible Man died. As Flora and the movie audience watched, he slowly became visible. Jack Griffin, portrayed by actor Claude Rains, was visible only in death.



The insane Dr. Moreau (Charles Laughton) is attacked by his pitiful monsters.

MORE MAD SCIENTISTS

The mad scientist movies of the 1930's were a great success. Then, as now, many people did not understand science too well. It was almost like magic. Scientists had powers that common folks only dreamed of. And if a scientist went mad — why, there was no telling what he might do!

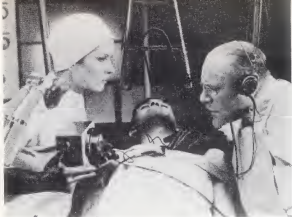
Another novel by H. G. Wells became a horror classic, *The Island of Lost Souls*. The mad doctor of this film was played by Charles Laughton.

Dr. Moreau tried to speed up evolution. He experimented with animals on his island. The results were "manimals" — half-human beings with different, horrible animal bodies.

Dr. Moreau used the manimals as his slaves. His greatest experiment produced a panther-woman named Lota. A shipwrecked sailor named Parker came to the island. Dr. Moreau decided he would be Lota's mate.

Then a rescue expedition arrived, looking for Parker. Dr. Moreau ordered his manimals to kill the captain of the expedition.

Once they had tasted blood, the manimals revolted from Dr. Moreau's cruel rule over them. In an awful climax, the half-human creatures dragged Dr. Moreau away. They planned to "experiment" on him just as he had tortured them in the name of science.



*Margarette Churchill and Edmund Gwenn make a big mistake in reviving Boris Karloff in **The Living Dead**.*

Dr. Moreau was an evil man. But some of the mad scientists were not bad. They just misused their knowledge. In *The Walking Dead* (1936), Edmund Gwenn played a doctor. He experimented with ways to bring dead people back to life.

When John Ellerman, played by Boris Karloff, was framed for murder and executed, Gwenn brought him back to life. The experiment was not a complete success since Karloff was turned into a revenge seeking zombie. He destroyed each of the evil doers who had framed him. He then died, once again his savage work being done.

The brilliant Karloff played a mad scientist himself in many films. He was an evil Oriental in *The Mask of Fu Manchu* (1932). He was stopped from his attempt to master the world with a death-ray.

In *The Invisible Ray* (1936), he tampered with secrets of the universe and became radioactive. An interesting beginning to the movie stated: "The scientific dream of today may well become the scientific fact of tomorrow."

In *The Man They Could Not Hang* (1939), Karloff was executed when his mechanical heart caused death instead of life. However, the scientist was restored to life by his own invention. He punished those who had destroyed him.



Karloff in a scene from The Man They Could Not Hang.

Many mad scientist movies used the idea of bringing the dead back to life.

One of the best of these was *Revenge of the Zombies*. This classic of horror was filmed in 1944. The mad scientist was played by John Carradine, who also played mad doctors in *Captive Wild Woman*, *Invisible Man's Revenge*, and *Return of the Ape-Man*.

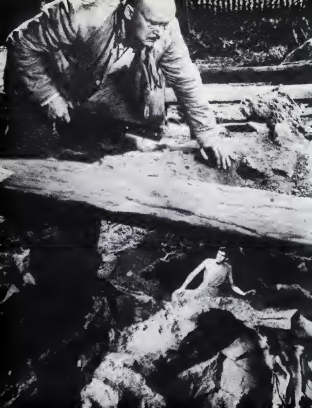
As a mad zombie-maker, Carradine created many walking dead folk to do his bidding. Then his lovely wife died after an unsuccessful operation. Carradine could not stop from bringing her back to semi-life — as a zombie.

Of course, the evil doctor gets what's coming to him in the end. The zombies gang up on the fellow who has upset their sleep. And one more mad scientist bites the dust in Hollywood.

John Carradine made a career out of horror movies. He became one of the well known screen villains and still was active in the 1970's. His sons joined him in show business, carrying on their father's work.

*John Carradine is about to get what's coming to him in *Revenge of the Zombies*.*





A different kind of mad scientist appeared in *Dr. Cyclops* (1939). This was the first horror film to be made in color. It starred Albert Dekker as the insane Dr. Thorkel.

Thorkel lived deep in the jungle. He invented a ray-machine that could shrink living things to one-sixth their normal size. A group of scientists came to visit Thorkel. He decided to use them in his experiments. They were given an instant reducing treatment under the ray.

Five tiny people, less than a foot tall, escaped from Thorkel's lab. They decided they would have to kill the doctor before he killed them.

The midgets fled from dangers such as a giant cat and huge chicken. Dr. Thorkel himself hunted them with a butterfly net.

Finally, they tried to make the scientist powerless by breaking his glasses. They smashed one lens, then Thorkel discovered them. In anger, he killed one of the mini-people. He chased the others outside. They led him toward an open well.

Blind in one eye, the mad scientist tripped in. He clung to a rope. The bravest of the tiny men went down the rope and forced Thorkel to let go. And so the mad scientist was gone forever.

Ten days later, the effects of the ray wore off. The mini-people returned to normal size.

Albert Dekker seeks out tiny victims in Dr. Cyclops.

The mad scientist in *Tarantula* (1955) didn't make things small. Instead, he made them large!

Leo G. Carroll played Dr. Deemer, who didn't start out mad. Deemer experimented with glands. He wanted to treat diseases caused by glands that did not work the way they should.

Deemer's experiments worked on animals. He made both a rat and a guinea pig grow large. But then the doctor's assistant tried the serum. It turned him into a monster.

It also drove him insane.

Leo G. Carroll checks a giant rat and guinea pig.





Giant Tarantula.

The crazed assistant injected the doctor with his own medicine. Presto! Another evil human! The two of them fought. A cage holding one of Deemer's experimental animals was broken. The beast escaped.

It was a tarantula — ten feet across!

Still growing, the spider terrorized Arizona. In the movie's climax, it was hunted down and killed.

Many other "giant critter" movies have been made. They are among the most popular horror films. There have been giant ants, giant grasshoppers, giant mantises, giant chimps and even giant rabbits.

Those mad scientists just never learn to leave well-enough alone!

Among the best of the “giant critter” movies was *The Fly* (1958).

A French Canadian scientist built a machine that would teleport living things. That is, it would dissolve a thing to its atomic particles, transmit the particles across space, then put them back together again.

The scientist tried to teleport himself across the room. He got into the booth of the machine. He dissolved, but he did not know that there was a fly in the booth with him!

When the scientist was put back together again, he had the head and claw of the fly. The tiny insect had a human head and hand.

The scientist tried very hard to catch the fly. If he had it, he might be able to correct the mistake. But the insect stayed out of reach.

In a moving ending, the fly-headed man writes a note on a blackboard to his wife: “I love you.” He asks her to destroy the results of his experiment.

They go to a factory owned by their family. The scientist places his fly-head and claw under a huge press. His wife presses the button that crushes the evidence of the scientific mistake.

And the fly with the human head? It is eaten by a spider!



Vincent Price is attacked by the 12-headed monster.

The maddest of the mad scientists was Victor Frankenstein. When people think of mad doctors, they remember Frankenstein's lab. The machine. The lightning flash. The monster coming to life.

Frankenstein's monster became a killer. He turned on his own master. Too late, Victor realized that he had tried to "play God." In this movie, as in other mad scientist stories, there is the idea that certain kinds of knowledge are forbidden.



*Both Ernest Thesiger and Colin Clive play mad scientists in **Bride of Frankenstein** (1935).*



Boris Karloff shows signs of life under the care of Basil Rathbone in Son of Frankenstein (1939).

Today, people go to mad scientist movies and enjoy a good scare. Some of the older horror films, such as the Fu Manchu stories, are even funny.

But there is a serious question we may ask after the movies are over. Are there limits to science? Are there some things it is better not to tamper with? People asked that question after the atomic bombs were made. They are asking it today, when science is on the edge of being able to create life.

MONSTERS



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MY FRIENDS!

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GODZILLA
KING KONG
THE MUMMY
FRANKENSTEIN
MAD SCIENTISTS
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